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IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1 - 31 (canceled)

Claim 32 (currently amended): A computerized freight management method for arranging for shipment of a load from a shipper by a carrier, based on shipping data and carrier data supplied by the shipper and the carrier, ~~respectively~~, or for arranging for the buying or selling of a product, wherein the product comprises either a good or service, based on buyer data and seller data supplied by the buyer and the seller, ~~respectively~~, the method comprising:

inputting into the central processing system a request for bids from and by the shipper for shipping the load or from and by a buyer for purchasing a product;

~~electronically~~ transmitting an invitation electronically to bid for shipping the load or purchasing a product from and by the central processing system to a plurality of carriers [[:]].

wherein carriers or sellers can review the individual invitations on their individual bulletin boards or use the bulletin board, master bulletin board and grand master bulletin board transportation tool concept to address, compare individual and alternatives, coordinate, and analyze a myriad of critical interrelated aspects of the freight management, product and service environments to determine best business decisions prior to responding.

wherein the individual bulletin boards being combined into master bulletin

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boards and into the grand master bulletin board addresses all transportation, product and service subsets including areas like individual and multiple loads, combined loads, multiple deliveries, tours, interlining, warehousing, products and services,

wherein these bulletin boards may be public or private:

~~electronically~~ receiving bids electronically at the central processing system from and by at least some of the carriers for shipping the load or from and by the sellers for selling a product;

~~electronically~~ transmitting to the shipper electronically a bid report with bids received from at least some of the carriers or some of the sellers receiving the invitation to bid from and generated by the central processing system; without the shipper initiating communication with the computer system,
~~and~~

wherein shippers or buyers can review the individual bid reports on their individual bulletin boards or use the bulletin board, master bulletin board and grand master bulletin board transportation tool concept to address, compare individual and alternatives, coordinate, and analyze a myriad of critical interrelated aspects of the freight management, product and service environments to determine the best business decisions prior to responding,

wherein the individual bulletin boards being combined into master bulletin boards and into the grand master bulletin board addresses all transportation, product and service subsets including areas like

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individual and multiple loads, combined loads, multiple deliveries, tours, interlining, warehousing, products and services.

wherein these bulletin boards may be public or private:

~~electronically~~ receiving electronically at the central processing system from and by the shipper or from and by the buyer a bid selection of at least one of the bids [[.]]; and

storing all entries both public and private to the grand master bulletin board, along with to the appropriate master bulletin boards and to the appropriate bulletin boards electronically by the computer system.

Claim 33 (currently amended): The method of claim 32, further comprising the step of responding to the bid selection by the shipper or buyer by the central processing system electronically transmitting a name and a phone number of the corresponding one of the carriers or sellers to the shipper or buyer.

Claim 34 (currently amended): The method of claim 32, wherein the invitation to bid is first transmitted from the central processing system to a third party, who then communicates the invitation to bid to a plurality of carriers or sellers in locations remote from the central processing system [[;]], and

wherein the bids for at least some of the carriers or sellers are electronically received at the central processing system as inputted from and by the third party.

Claim 35 (currently amended): The method of claim 32, wherein the step of

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~~electronically~~ transmitting an invitation to bid electronically further includes
~~electronically~~ transmitting invitations for bids electronically for a plurality of
loads from and by the central processing system to an individual carrier or seller.

Claim 36 (currently amended): The method of claim 32, wherein the step of
~~electronically~~ transmitting to the shipper or buyer electronically a plurality of
bids further includes ~~electronically~~ transmitting to the shipper or buyer
electronically bids for a plurality of loads from a plurality of carriers or sellers from
and by the central processing system.

Claim 37 (currently amended): A computerized method of buying or selling a
product wherein the product comprises either a good or a service, the method
comprising:

making a plurality of invitations to bid from a plurality of buyers available to a
plurality of sellers on the computer system for electronic access by the
sellers [[;]].

wherein carriers or sellers can review the individual invitations on their
individual bulletin boards or use the bulletin board, master bulletin
board and grand master bulletin board transportation tool concept to
address, compare individual and alternatives, coordinate, and analyze a
myriad of critical interrelated aspects of the freight management,
product and service environments to determine the best business
decisions prior to responding.

wherein the individual bulletin boards being combined into master bulletin
boards and into the grand master bulletin board addresses all

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transportation, product and service subsets including areas like individual and multiple loads, combined loads, multiple deliveries, tours, interlining, warehousing, products and services,

wherein these bulletin boards may be public or private;

making a plurality of bids from a plurality of sellers available to buyers on said computer system for electronic access by the buyers;

receiving in response electronically ~~to receiving~~ a plurality of bids from a plurality of sellers for a product requested by a buyer, making an analysis of the bids and generating a first report that ranks the bids according to at least one predetermined criterion stored in the computer system; [[and]]

transmitting the first report to the buyer electronically without the buyer initiating communication with the computer system [[:]].

wherein shippers or buyers can review the individual bid reports on their individual bulletin boards or use the bulletin board, master bulletin board and grand master bulletin board transportation tool concept to address, compare individual and alternatives, coordinate, and analyze a myriad of critical interrelated aspects of the freight management, product and service environments to determine best business decisions prior to responding,

wherein the individual bulletin boards being combined into master bulletin boards and into the grand master bulletin board addresses all transportation, product and service subsets including areas like

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individual and multiple loads, combined loads, multiple deliveries, tours, interlining, warehousing, products and services,

wherein these bulletin boards may be public or private;

wherein the buyer can select one of the bids and communicate an acceptance to the computer system, which will then notify the other party of the communication to complete the sale [[.]]; and

storing all entries both public and private to the grand master bulletin board, along with to the appropriate master bulletin boards and to the appropriate bulletin boards electronically by the computer system.

Claim 38 (currently amended): The method of claim 37, wherein in response to receiving a plurality of invitations to bid from a plurality of buyers, making an analysis of the offers to invitations to bid and distributing the invitations to bid to sellers according to at least one predetermined criterion stored in the computer system; and

transmitting the second report electronically to the seller without the seller initiating communication with the computer system.

Claim 39 (previously presented): The method of claim 37, wherein forms containing the invitations to bid can be stored in the computer system, and revised with indicators by adding a letter suffix to the system number to save re-inputting the forms into the computer system.

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Claim 40 (previously presented): The method of claim 37, wherein invitations to bid can be imported in large numbers from existing computer databases through the use of electronic transfer programs.

Claim 41 (currently amended): The method of claim 37, wherein a duplicate of an invitation to bid on the computer system is transmitted from the computer system to a third party intermediary [[:]].

wherein the third party intermediary is unable to change any data or information of the original invitation to bid except for the list of potential sellers for receiving the resulting request to buy from the third party intermediary [[:]]. and

indicating on the computer system an original of the invitation to bid and on the duplicate that they are being communicated to potential sellers or carriers at the same time.

Claim 42 (currently amended): The method of claim 37, wherein the plurality of invitations to bid from a plurality of buyers available to a plurality of sellers on the computer system for electronic access by the buyers includes making loads available to carriers on an electronic bulletin board accessed through the computer system [[:]].

wherein making a plurality of bids by a plurality of sellers available to buyers on said computer system for electronic access by the ~~sellers~~ seller's buyers includes making prospective scheduled carriers available to shippers on an electronic bulletin board accessed through the computer system.

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Claim 43 (currently amended): The method of claim 37, wherein the invitations to bid are provided by transportation shippers [[:]], and

wherein the bids are provided by transportation carriers [[:]], and

wherein the computer system electronically selects invitations to bid or bids in groups of seven and orders the bids or invitations to bid based on price and other factors.

Claim 44 (previously presented): The method of claim 37, wherein the reports to the buyer are accessible on the computer system through a carrier bulletin board and the reports to the seller are accessible on the computer system through a shipper bulletin board.

Claim 45 (currently amended): The method of claim 37, further comprising maintaining a grand master bulletin board of all data on the computer system which further comprises publicly accessible shipper or buyer master bulletin boards and bulletin boards and publicly accessible carrier or seller master bulletin boards and bulletin boards and private access networks that have limited access.

Claim 46 (currently amended): The method of claim 37, further comprising a grand mast3r bulletin board, master bulletin boards and bulletin boards with line items including items for sale and line item link buttons on said grand master bulletin board, master bulletin boards and bulletin boards for directly accessing other data provided by the buyers and sellers.

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Claim 47 (currently amended): The method of claim 37, wherein available transportation equipment and planned trips, as well as loads, warehousing, products and services can be entered into the system all ~~likened~~ similar to a load with qualifications and descriptions as line items in lists of items and/or with descriptive prefixes.

Claim 48 (currently amended): The method of claim 37, wherein invitations to bid and bids transmitted to the buyers or shippers and sellers or carriers ~~, respectively,~~ do not indicate the identity of the buyers and the sellers, ~~- respectively, thereby allowing~~ wherein the anonymity of each and requiring selections [[to]] can be based on individual qualifications and price.

Claim 49 (currently amended): The method of claim 37, further characterized in invitations to bid and bids transmitted to the buyers or shippers and sellers or carriers ~~, respectively,~~ do not indicate the identity of the buyers or shippers and the sellers or carriers ~~, respectively,~~ do indicate the identity of the buyers and the sellers, ~~respectively~~ as the participants are already associated with or contracted to each other, thereby eliminating the need for anonymity.

Claim 50 (currently amended): The method of claim 37, wherein a third party can initially submit a bid to a buyer or shipper of \$0.00 or use a decline button indicating that for whatever reason the request to buy has been reviewed but has been declined, or the third party can initially bid \$1.00 or use an accept button to indicate that the reviewed request to buy will be handled and that the final bid and/or rate will be forthcoming, so that the buyer or shipper will not have to submit the request to buy to another carrier or seller.

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Claim 51 (currently amended): The method of claim 37, wherein bids by sellers or carriers for re-locating empty containers can be positive dollar amounts, zero or negative dollar amounts which would indicate that the seller or carrier would pay the buyer or shipper to move the empty container.

Claim 52 (previously presented): The method of claim 37, wherein the invitations to bid, bids and reports are transmitted by facsimile as facsimile data files and are converted on a receiving end using an optical character recognition program.

Claim 53 (previously presented): The method of claim 37, wherein invitations to bid, bids and reports are transmitted over the Internet.

Claim 54 (previously presented): The method of claim 37, wherein invitations to bid, bids and reports are transmitted in a data file via e-mail.

Claim 55 (previously presented): The method of claim 37, wherein the invitations to bid, bids and reports are created through interactive voice response.

Claim 56 (previously presented): The method of claim 37, further comprising the step of inputting carrier profile data into computer system, wherein the carrier data includes carrier identification data, carrier contact data, carrier service area data, carrier intermodal capabilities data, carrier load type services data, carrier type data, carrier annual revenue data, carrier employee size data, carrier on-time and damage-free delivery ratings data, carrier equipment data, carrier special services data, carrier commodities hauled data, carrier financial condition

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data, carrier hazardous license data, carrier driver data, carrier insurance data, and carrier rules and charges data.

Claim 57 (currently amended): The method of claim 37, wherein the invitation to bid can be compared with seller or carrier profile data previously input to the computer system to select a group of qualified sellers or carriers to receive the invitation to bid.

Claim 58 (currently amended): The method of claim 37, further comprising inputting buyer or shipper profile data into the computer system, wherein the buyer or shipper data includes buyer or shipper identification data, buyer or shipper contact data, buyer or shipper annual revenue data, buyer or shipper number of employees, and buyer or shipper financial data.

Claim 59 (currently amended): The method of claim 37, wherein the invitation to bid includes buyer or shipper qualifications to make a bid.

Claim 60 (currently amended): The method of claim 37, further comprising individual buyer or shipper and seller or carrier bulletin boards which can be customized by the buyers or shippers and sellers or carriers to the requirements of the buyers and sellers ~~—respectively—~~.

Claim 61 (previously presented): The method of claim 37, further comprising displaying multiple windows providing the display of a plurality of bulletin boards including at least two of the following: a bulletin board for transportation loads, a bulletin board for available transportation equipment, a bulletin board for trips, a bulletin board for products, and a bulletin board for warehousing services.

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Claim 62 (previously presented): The method of claim 37, further comprising private access networks with access to the computer system, each private access network requiring input of individual member numbers and authorization codes for access to the computer system.

Claim 63 (Currently amended): A computerized freight management system for arranging for shipment of a load from a shipper by a carrier, based on shipping data and carrier data supplied by the shipper and the carrier ~~respectively,~~ or for arranging for the buying or selling of a product, wherein the product comprises either a good or service, based on buyer data and seller data supplied by the buyer and the seller, ~~respectively,~~ the system comprising:

a central processing system;

means for making a plurality of invitations to bid from a plurality of shippers available to a plurality of carriers as a carriers bulletin board on the computer system for electronic access from the central processing system by the carriers or from a plurality of buyers available to a plurality of sellers as a ~~carriers~~ seller's master bulletin board and/or bulletin board on the computer system for electronic access from the central processing system by the sellers;

means for making a plurality of bids from a plurality of carriers available to shippers on said computer system as a shipper's bulletin board for electronic access from the central processing system by the shippers or from a plurality of sellers available to buyers on said computer system as a buyer's master bulletin board and/or bulletin board for electronic access from the central processing system by the buyers;

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said shipper's master bulletin board and/or bulletin board and said carrier's master bulletin board and/or bulletin board are integrated together into a grand master bulletin board on the central processing system or said buyer's master bulletin board and/or bulletin board and said seller's master bulletin board and/or bulletin board are integrated together into a grand master bulletin board on the central processing system that is publicly accessible of which can be viewed by a member of the public [[:]], and

wherein said grand master bulletin board also includes private master bulletin boards and bulletin boards that are only accessible by a limited number of parties having proper identification and passwords for access.

Claim 64 (previously presented): The freight management system of claim 63, wherein the central processing system includes at least one central processing unit and a communication interface to the Internet.

Claim 65 (previously presented): The freight management system of claim 63, wherein the central processing system includes at least one central processing unit, a memory for storing a database of shipper profile data and carrier profile data, and a communication interface to the Internet.

Claim 66 (previously presented): The freight management system of claim 63, wherein the central processing system includes at least one central processing unit, a memory for storing a database of shipper profile data and carrier profile data along with all of the individual load, equipment, product, services and the resulting transactional process and system, network, site integration data, and a communication interface to the Internet.

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Claim 67 (previously presented): The method of claim 37, wherein the central processing system includes at least one central processing unit, a memory for storing a database of shipper profile data and carrier profile data along with all of the individual load, equipment, product, services and the resulting transactional process and system, network, site integration data, and a communication interface to the Internet.

Claim 68 (previously presented): The method of claim 37, wherein the central processing system and/or database is located on and/or remote from the Internet.